

February 21, 1980

LB 612

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Nichol.

SENATOR NICHOL: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature, just a minute of your time, please. I support the kill motion on this bill. If I were to walk down the street and find a man intoxicated and I would go through his pockets and take his money and I would ask you, what do you think of that? Perhaps some of you might say he had it coming. Perhaps some would say you preyed on his weakness and that is exactly what I would have done and you would have condemned me for it. I think Senator Maresh made a good point. The people in Nebraska have a moral fiber that I don't think we should ignore. The people in Nebraska have never had a clamoring for a lottery. In fact, all that I have heard from in my district are opposed to the lottery, therefore, I am opposed to the lottery, too, but I am opposed to the lottery in addition to that because I think when the Legislature, even though we are criticized at times, we should be an example to the people of the State of Nebraska because we are the highest office in the state, and if we say, yes, lottery is all right, some people will rely on our judgment just as we were considering laetrile awhile back. People say the Legislature says it is okay, it is a cure. I can use it. My point is that if we are to be leaders, then we should also be leaders morally and not say lottery, a thing that preys on the weaknesses of people, is okay. Even though it is a perfect tax, a tax that somebody else pays, I don't think it is morally right for us to stand here or to pass legislation that preys on the weaknesses of others.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, of course, I have been playing with Ernie on these lottery things for about ten years now but it was 1975 when I almost had my finest moment on lotteries, Ernie ended up winning that time. We came within one vote of passing a lottery and I thought I would throw out a few things that did come to light at that time, some statistical evidence that we documented. I can gather it up again for you and play it out here if you like but the common arguments always given against the lottery, some of the most common arguments, are, for example, the poor are the ones that buy the lottery tickets. Overwhelming evidence shows that is just not the case. I think if Senator Simon has done his homework he probably has the documentation. The average, the average person that buys a lottery ticket is somebody probably in the fifteen, twenty, twenty-five thousand dollar category